509 Steering Committee Meeting Summary

Practical Design Workshop #2
March 24, 2016

Steering Committee Participants:

Name	Organization
Alex Soldano	GTHGA
Andrew Merges	City of Des Moines
Brian Roberts	City of Burien
Charles Prestrud	NWR Systems Planning Manager
Charlie Howard, PSRC	PSRC
Craig Helmann	PSRC
Florendo Cabudol	City of SeaTac
Geri Poor	Port of Seattle
Greg Lippincott	WSDOT
Lindsey Handel	FHWA
Natarajan Janarthanan	WSDOT
Nic Longo	Port of Seattle
Rob Fellows	WSDOT
Sandra Fann	Sound Transit
Steve Mullen	City of Kent

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Bonnie Kramer	WSDOT, SR 167
Brenda Campbell	Poulsbo RV
Brittany Jardow	Outcomes by Levy
Craig Grandstrom	CH2MHill
Scott Twomey	Poulsbo RV
Steve Fuchs	WSDOT, SR 167
Thomas Slimak	WSDOT, SR 167

Staff:

- Craig Stone, Puget Sound Gateway Program Administrator
- Omar Jepperson, SR 509 Project Manager
- Tes Abraha, WSDOT
- Allison Hanson, HNTB
- Dan Holmquist, HNTB
- Wendy Taylor, HNTB
- Karl Westby, Westby Consulting
- Bob Sicko, Fehr & Peers
- Emily Mannetti, PRR
- Tori Varyu, PRR

Introduction and Project Context

Craig Stone welcomed everyone, began with a round of introductions and reviewed the agenda.

Craig began his presentation by stating that the project was within the 'Define Performance Metrics' phase of the Work Plan. Craig then discussed important context for the project including key regional growth areas, urban growth centers and manufacturing industrial centers.

- One attendee asked the project team to clarify if the graph depicting various highways included the Select Link tracks.
    - The project team responded that it did include Select Link as well as many of the other highways and transit projects in the area. The team also addressed that this graph is a good visual representation of the many transit projects being implemented on the corridor.

Traffic Forecasting Application

Karl Westby then moved into the Traffic Forecasting application discussion. He began by reviewing previous forecasting models and then handed the discussion to Bob Sicko, from Fehr and Peers, who compared previous models with the current models. Bob mentioned that these new models would provide:

- Time of day demands
- More accurate trip generation numbers
- Greater network resolution
- Capacity constraints
- Tolling effects

Bob showed attendees different graphs to give a better understanding of how the model would work and the area of influence the team is modeling. He continued by giving an overview of assumed transportation projects including local agency plans, WSDOT regional projects and Sound Transit 3 projects. In addition to these plans, Bob discussed how truck trips would be addressed in the model. While acknowledging that there is limited truck data available, Bob mentioned that the team was pulling data from:

- PSRC truck module
- Freight Analysis Framework
- Existing truck counts
- Seattle marine terminal truck information

Bob then moved into discussing the data that would be extracted from the model, which included future year demands, travel time and delays measured by facility and area. Bob then opened up the conversation for discussion. Questions and comments included the following:

- *Sound Transit*: Sound Transit suggested that ST3 be considered more carefully in the planning of the SR 509 corridor. The project team indicated that they had many one on one conversations with Sound Transit staff as well as King County metro staff to ensure that other transportation plans were being considered.

- Several attendees had questions regarding the project list:
    - *FHWA*: FWHA asked if the Federal Way Link project was included in the project list. The project team said that the Federal Way Link project is broken up in sections based on the Puget Sound Regional Council's project list.
    - *Port of Seattle*: The Port of Seattle asked if the South Access project was supposed to be in the 2045 No Build. The project team mentioned that it was actually supposed to be in the 2045 Build section. Additionally, the team said that they would include the closure of 182nd and the connection to the airport in the 2025 section of the grid.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked if the baseline considered a no-toll scenario. The project team responded that the baseline/existing condition considers no tolling on SR 509 or any other roads besides the SR 520 Bridge. However, the team said that future scenarios specific to the SR 509 project will consider tolled and not tolled options.
- *PSRC*: PSRC asked if the project team was also conducting truck modeling along with traffic forecasting modeling. The project team confirmed this and mentioned that they were working to include this information into the model as soon as possible.
- *Port of Seattle*: The Port asked if the project team had received the forecasts from the Port Master Plan, including a new survey that might help the team understand where trips are starting from. The project team said that they were currently looking at individuals traveling from SR 99, but that they would likely include data from the survey as they began studying trips closer to SeaTac.

Craig Stone then mentioned some changes being considered, including changing some HOV lanes to express toll lanes and creating a possible auxiliary lane from SR 509 to 272nd. Craig mentioned that his assumption would be that in 2025 the HOV lane will be a 3+ HOV lane, but in 2045 the team might consider express tolling. He then asked for opinions from attendees:

- Several attendees agreed that Craig's assumption would be reasonable.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked if the assumption was consistent with the assumptions made in the Triangle Stage 2 project and the Federal Way Link project. Craig Grandstrom, from CH2M Hill, mentioned that the Federal Way Link project might have assumed a 2+ HOV lane. The project team then mentioned that while there will be some discrepancies because each project has a different horizon year, they would pull this information from each project to ensure that there weren't major discrepancies.

Project Needs

Craig Stone then moved into a review of the project purpose and needs, pulling from the 2003 EIS Purpose, Needs and Objectives. Omar Jepperson then pulled up two tables, one with a list of 'essential needs' and one with a list of 'contextual needs' that were established at Meeting 1. Each table also included updated needs based on feedback the project team has received, and a need to create needs and metrics that are quantifiable. He asked attendees to provide their feedback on each table, which included the following questions and comments:

- *FHWA*: FHWA asked if the project team would consider moving essential need 7 – to improve transit operations and connections to transit - to the list of contextual needs rather than deleting it from the list completely. The project team responded that there are contextual needs

that consider transit travel time and transit travel time reliability, therefore this specific need is covered in other parts of the plan.

- *FHWA*: FHWA also asked how the team would 'reduce' travel time, etc. when the corridor was not in existence yet. The project team said that they picked 12 centers throughout the Seattle-Tacoma area to study and measure current travel time without the new corridor. The team said they will compare that existing travel time to the time of the new scenarios they were developing and see if there is a reduction and by how much.
- *WSDOT*: WSDOT asked about how the team was using quantitative and qualitative data. The project team explained that they are doing quantitative analysis to support the qualitative ratings in the Scenario Comparison Table. For example, a travel time improvement in minutes between centers will be used to support a qualitative rating of "Very Good".
- *WSDOT*: Charles Prestrud asked what the team considered a sensitive area. The team responded that a sensitive area would be stream and wetland areas and their buffers already surveyed and located along the corridor.
- *Port of Seattle*: The Port of Seattle asked if there are any environmental justice issues that need to be addressed. The team responded that they would be looking at those types of effects in the environmental update, which will put a lot of emphasis on the 'with or without tolling' conversation and evaluation.

Scenario Comparison Table/Proposed Project

Omar Jepperson then presented the Scenario Comparison Table and explained that Meeting 3 will walk through different components of each scenario. Omar asked for feedback on the general components of the table:

- *Port of Seattle*: The Port asked about the evaluation process and how the team would decide on one scenario. The team responded that they would address the type of quantitative and/or qualitative analysis that would be conducted to evaluate each situation.
- *Port of Seattle*: The Port asked if these the scenarios were the same ones that Bob Sicko is using for his models. The project team responded that are the same. The team will use the performance metrics to talk about how each scenario compares and then will run the models again.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked why the project subarea does not continue up to the Port. The project team said that this is an option up for consideration.
    - Bob Sicko suggested that the area reach further north on I-5 (to SR 99 or Spokane St.) to capture where some of these trips are starting. Bob suggested that the same work should be done on SR 509 to understand how the corridor is operating as a whole. Craig agreed with this analysis and responded by saying that the project team would consider expanding the subarea to the Duwamish or at least to Spokane St.
- *City of Kent*: The City of Kent suggested that by breaking the project up by movements, the team might be able to more easily secure funding for those individual routes.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked the project team to further articulate the characteristics of the five scenarios. The project team responded that they would be doing so in Meeting 3. The team also mentioned that they had already drafted rough descriptions for anyone to take a look at.

- *FHWA*: FHWA asked how the team would measure movement. The project team responded that they plan to use highway capacity software analysis for the different connection points by scenario.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked what the boundaries are for the crash analyses.
    - The project team responded that they would have to run the travel demand model and look at where the effects are to understand the boundaries. This type of analysis will be done once the group has agreed on the final scope of the project and project area.
- *City of Kent*: The City of Kent asked whether it was true that at one point the team was considering the total number of crashes in the corridor, but now are only looking at serious ones. The team agreed that their focus is on reducing serious and fatal crashes.
- *Port of Seattle*: The Port asked what the intermodal and multi modal terms refer to. The team responded that one refers to trips in and out of the airport and the other refers to center to center travel (e.g. connections to transit, etc.). The team explained that by intermodal they are referring to freight travel and multi modal refers to car and bike travel. The project team made a note to communicate the difference.
- *FHWA*: FHWA asked about the right of way that is included in the table because there is right of way already purchased. The project team explained that they need to evaluate particular areas and understand the tradeoffs of the right of way. Eventually the Executive Committee will want to weigh in on it, so they included it in the table.
- *The Port of Seattle*: The Port asked if the Scenarios table included only 2025 or 2045 projects, or if it was a mix. The project team responded that it was a mix. The team explained that the projects can be considered as a whole or as sectioned parts, depending on the project.
- *WSDOT*: WSDOT suggested finding a way to factor redundancy into the reliability discussion since it will be a big part of the project, especially if the project has to deal with emissions data.
- *FHWA*: FHWA suggested including mitigation steps in the table instead of simply choosing to have or to not have an impact at all. The impact could be at any level, so it also might not be a deciding factor in a specific scenario. The project team agreed and mentioned that this part of the table might simply be part of the contextual conversation instead of being considered a fatal flaw. The team also mentioned that this type of information would be reflected in the tradeoffs discussion.
- *City of Burien*: The City of Burien asked if the project team had considered whether the savings being extracted from this project would go back into the state fund and whether or not that would affect any grants the team might go after. The team responded that the money would go back into a transportation fund, but that it could affect the team's grants. Overall, it is a conversation that will have to be had state-wide and with multiple executive committees.

Natarajan Janarthanan then briefly discussed the use of the REMI model which will help the project team understand the economic benefits of each scenario. Natarajan explained that different input factors go into the model so the output will help the team to understand the gross product change of the area, among other evaluators. He explained that while the model cannot give results interchange by interchange, it can give a general investment understanding. He explained that the model is currently in testing. Next, Natarajan explained that the model will be used to create a cost-benefit analysis also including any funding that the team secures.

Developing Scenarios

Omar went through a list of developing scenarios, using a map to show how options at each interchange and to show how scenarios are being pieces together.

- *City of SeaTac*: The City recommended that the project team ensure that the fate of SR 509 is not tied too closely to the fate of ST3. The project team agreed and mentioned that they might toggle other projects on and off during testing to see how results change.

Project Schedule

Omar then went through the project schedule for the upcoming year which included the schedules for Steering Committee meetings, Executive Committee meetings and Open Houses. The project team also mentioned that they would like to have a discussion about grants and how organizations, cities and the legislature will have to work together in order to get the best amount of grant money possible. This topic was introduced, but discussion was tabled for the time being.

- *Port of Seattle*: The Port asked if the team planned to share their findings from the microsimulations of the scenarios. The team said they would once they had been completed.

Action Items

- Provide revised, more specific performance metrics.
- Related to improving the southern connection to the Sea-Tac Airport, include the closure of 182nd in the grid under 2025.
- Pull data from other local projects, including Federal Way Link, to understand if there are major discrepancies in the assumptions of what SR 509 will look like (e.g. 2+ or 3+ HOV lane, possible tolling areas, etc.)
- Expand the subarea. The north border should include the Duwamish area to Spokane Street. Consider if the larger subarea should be divided into two pieces.
- Explicitly define the terms multimodal and intermodal.
- Document the difference between Federal Way Link Extension, SR 509, and Triangle project future year assumptions, including discussion of why they may be different.
- Look at project improvements with and without ST3.
- Define the area or limits associated with the baseline performance metric “maintain or Improve I-5 operations”.
- Define what is meant by “South Sound”.